Colorado State Conservation Board 2007 Matching Grants Project: Northeast Prowers Conservation District: Stock Water Development on CRP

What natural resource problem(s) did the project address?

The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a federal cost-share program developed principally to encourage farmers to keep cover on fragile soils that are prone to erosion. Many CRP acreage enrollments expire in the next two years. The Northeast Prowers Conservation District identified the conversion of CRP lands to long-term well-managed rangeland as the best protection for their county's fragile soils. Cost-share of stock water tanks could encourage producers to keep the soils under permanent cover and help enable the best distribution of livestock for sound grazing management. Especially in drought-prone southeastern Colorado, good grazing management is important to prevent soil erosion and weed infestations on all rangelands.

What was achieved?

- Northeast Prowers District was hit both by extraordinary blizzards and a tornado in 2007 which disrupted
 much of the local ranchers' year. The District persisted when one of two of their original planned projects
 fell through and extended the other project to 390 acres of rangeland mainly on CRP land.
- Installations totaled 11,168 feet of pipeline, 6 hydrants and 1 water tank.
- Project technical design was to USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) standards and designed and monitored by NRCS and District technical staff.
- Landowner contributed 50% cost-share to the project two-thirds in hard cash.
- Prairie chickens have been seen within 2 miles of the project area and better management of rangeland made possible by the watering facility will improve wildlife habitat.



The drought prone, conditions of Prowers County make CRP conversion to rangeland a sound conservation decision for soil protection. Stock water tanks promote managed grazing for range health - improving both productivity and wildlife habitat.